

REMARKS

This amendment is responsive to the Office Action that was mailed May 22, 2008 (hereinafter "Office Action"). Applicants submit the following arguments in addition to the arguments previously presented and hereby incorporated by reference.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claim 1, 3, and 5-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mandelik et al. (U.S. Patent No. 3,771,261)("Mandelik") in view of Buswell et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,360,679)("Buswell").

Independent claim 1 of the present invention discloses a fuel processor for steam reforming a sulfur-containing hydrocarbon fuel. Claim 1 comprises "a pre-reformer for catalytically converting a reduced-sulfur hydrocarbon fuel to a mixture of C₁ and C₂ hydrocarbons" (emphasis added).

Mandelik is directed to the removal of sulfur by reacting the liquid stream with hydrogen to produce a gas stream in which the sulfur is contained in molecules such as hydrogen sulfide, light mercaptans, and thiophenes.

Neither Mandelik nor Buswell disclose pre-reforming the diesel (or another hydrocarbon fuel) with steam and then feeding the pre-reformed diesel to a steam reformed coupled with a carbon dioxide absorbing chemical.

As a result, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 10 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mandelik et al., U.S. Patent No. 3,771,261, in view of Buswell et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,360,679)("Buswell"), and further in view of Sechrist et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,965,473. Claim 10 is believed to be in condition for allowance by virtue of its dependency from amended claim 1. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

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All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection are believed to have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



Melissa Patangia
Attorney for Applicants
Reg. No. 52098

November 24, 2008
Chevron Services Company
P. O. Box 4368
Houston, Texas 77210-4368
713 754 2917 (Voice)
713 754 2944 (Fax)